

# The Kaleidoscope

A REFLECTION OF DIVERSITY IN PUBLIC WORKS



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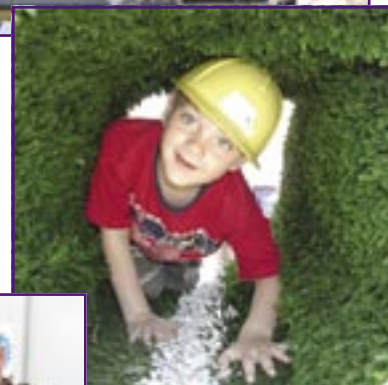
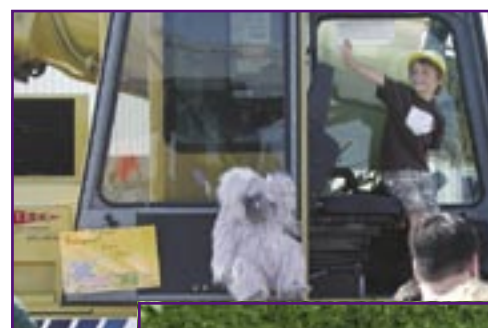
## Public Works Day Key Messages - Plush or Minus

Submitted by Mark Snyder, Parks and Open Space

Marshall McLuhan, in his 1964 work, "Understanding Media", said, "The medium is the message." Some Public Works Diversity Committee (PWDC) members two years ago decided to take that to heart when we came up with messages for children at Public Works Day. We knew we didn't want to be negative when communicating about different aspects of diversity. So – positive or negative? Plus or minus? We decided on plush.

Almost two dozen stuffed animals, or "plush" toys, were strategically placed about the yard at 1820 Roosevelt again this past May, along with colorful artwork and positive messages for all at PW Day. Examples included "Smile", "Be friends!", "Respect each other", "Care for others", "Reach for the sky", and "Take time to play!"

It's never too early to teach our children well, and these medium-sized messages, often placed down low where the kids could see and touch, seemed to be just right for the kids, even though many seemed to be more interested in the teddy bears than the writing. For PWDC folks, these little messages were a big success! Send us your own ideas for new messages for next year's PW Day!



# City Singers say "Stand by Me"

Mark Snyder contributed to this history of the City Singers written by its director, Maureen Robeson

What do Public Works employees John Luther, Jean Anderson, Philip Richardson, Mark Snyder, and Tracy Calhoun have in common most Tuesdays at noon? If you're ever near the Bascom/Tykeson room at the main library at that time you could probably hear them all crooning, howling "Blue Moon" or otherwise bop-bop-boppin' along with the City Singers.

The City Singers began in 1999 as part of Eugene's City-wide Diversity Celebration. City of Eugene Diversity Committee members had been charged with the task of figuring out creative ways to involve City employees in the celebration. Diversity Committee member Maureen Robeson, Executive Assistant to Angel Jones (being musically inclined) decided to organize a choir which would perform music representing varied cultures. Every City employee was invited to participate. The only requirements were (and still are) a desire to sing with a bunch of one's co-workers and a willingness to give up a lunch hour once or twice a week for a couple of months to prepare for performances. Some members belong to other performance groups, but until City Singers many hadn't performed since their high school choir days and some had never performed outside of their own shower stalls!

Today the group ranges in size from 20 to 40 City employees, depending on whether or not the rehearsals and performances conflict with their work schedules. Only about two-thirds of the members typically attend any given rehearsal. In fact performances are the only time everyone is available to show at once.

City Singers provides a rare opportunity for administrative aides, architects, computer techs, court administrators, engineers, human resource specialists, librarians, management analysts, 911 specialists, police officers, purchasers, property managers, tree specialists, etc., to step out of their respective work roles to come together and create something truly wonderful and fulfilling. Nearly every City department is represented.



*The City Singers perform a diverse selection of music at the NAACP's Annual Freedom Fund Dinner.*

In keeping with the spirit of diversity, the music styles range from 16th century madrigals to international folk tunes to doo-wop to Billy Joel. Most selections are sung in English; however, the singers perform and rehearse songs in Hebrew, Korean, Japanese, Latin, Spanish, French, German and various African dialects.

Mark Snyder said that while researching background on "Down By the Riverside" and other songs for his duties as City Singer emcee at the NAACP dinner last February, he found out that many American Negro Spirituals contained "code" words that helped run-away slaves. "Wade In the Water", for example, is not about being baptized as I originally thought. It was written and sung so children would learn to wade in the water of streams and rivers to avoid being tracked by dogs while escaping slavery on the Underground Railroad. Besides opportunities like this to learn about the history and culture of people all over the world, Snyder says the fun and rewards are "mostly about making music together. Working out all the notes, rhythms and different language words of a new song is often-times a hard job, sometimes with embarrassing mo-

ments -- if you're flat, sharp, or just plain way off-key, you can stick out like a sore thumb! But the end result of working together is, for me, an awe-inspiring feeling of a rich, harmonious sound coming from the whole group. The beauty of the sound would not be possible without all the parts being woven in together."

The City Singers have performed at Human Rights' celebrations, the monthly Interfaith Service, and at various City of Eugene events, including the Mayor's State of the City address, retirement parties, employee recognition events and diversity celebrations, the March First Friday event, and the NAACP Freedom Fund Dinner. Look for the City Singers in the Hult Center lobby next fall, when they will perform for a SHO Case free lunch-time event.



## Co-worker's Corner — It's About Us!



### Emily Proudfoot - Landscape Architect (Engineering)

Hometown: Eugene, Oregon

College: University of Oregon

Major: Landscape Architecture

Professional Ambitions: to balance work and family life well

My teammates describe me as: Spunky

My dream job is: This one!

One accomplishment I still hope to fulfill in my lifetime: raise my children to have good common sense

Advice from a mentor that I intend to pass along to someone else: there are dues to pay in almost anything in life, so embrace them as opportunities to learn

People I admire have these qualities: they're patient and calm even in the face of adversity

Activity in or around Oregon: hiking in the mountains in the summer

TV show that influenced me growing up: I grew up without a television

Cartoon character: Gromit of Wallace and Gromit

Musical artist or group: Beck and Bach



### Christine W. Fusco - Utility Billing Specialist (Administration)

Hometown: Texas

College: University of California-Riverside

Major: Art

Personal Ambitions: to run away and live in Italy

My teammates describe me as: outgoing and sarcastic

My dream job is: painting art that sells

Something very few people know about me: I speak pig Latin and collect 1st editions

This always brings a smile to my face: playing Santa

A charity organization or event that pulls at my heartstrings: Christian Children's Fund

My most prized possession: my wedding ring

Game to play: golf, Xbox and Mad Gab

Athlete or team I enjoy watching: GO DUCKS!!! And anything where there is blood involved



### Jim LaCasse - Maintenance Worker 1 (Maintenance)

Hometown: Los Gatos, California

College: Lane Community College and University of Oregon

Major: Music

Personal Ambitions: Happiness

My teammates describe me as: somebody who works hard

My dream job: music producer

My biggest adventure: backpacking in Yosemite

A priority that is on my "to do" list most days: work around the property

My most prized possession: drum set

Activity in or around Oregon: snow skiing

"Getaway" place: Desolation Wilderness Area, California

Musical artist or group: Rush



# Public Works Day 2006



## Movie Review *of* **crash** – by Damon Joyner of PWM

Released in the summer of 2005, *Crash* attempts to identify and perhaps raise one's awareness to the prejudices that surround us all by giving us a glimpse of the intertwined lives and events of a diverse cast. *Crash* is an Academy Award winning film, receiving three Oscars - including Best Picture, Best Original Screenplay and Best Editing, at the 78th Academy Awards in 2005.

The setting for the film is present day Los Angeles. While perhaps not all inclusive of society's composition in terms of representation, the cast is made up of a multi-ethnic population that includes law enforcement officers, business owners, public employees, criminals, business professionals, medical personnel, and average citizens.

For me, *Crash* was the first film in quite some time that stirred emotion and nudged, actually 'booted' is more accurate, me over the comfortable, imaginary boundary encompassing mindless entertainment. My imaginary boundary is, however, only comfortable when I am able to avoid the thorny brambles that separate conscious thought and mindless entertainment.

Over the last year I've seen *Crash* twice and I may watch it yet again. I still find myself reflecting on what the film means to me, which may be contributing to the challenge I've encountered in writing this review. One association rings true for me. I am drawn to what I perceive as the similarities in the individuals more than their differences. Doesn't each of us want to be respected, understood, and feel safe? In my opinion the similarities are significant and the differences are trivial. Perhaps when we as humans reach a point of valuing our similarities, our differences won't seem nearly as important or distinct.

In viewing *Crash*, you will most certainly develop your own opinions about the film's validity or value to you. If you're not sure what to make of this film, you will find a plethora of views and opinions a click away on the web.

If you have not seen this film, check it out. If you have already seen the film, watch it again. At approximately 120 minutes in length, it is well worth the time investment--for mental stimulation or sheer entertainment. Enjoy!



# Pastel de Tamal (Tamale Pie)

Recipe from the "Rancho Cooking" Mexican & Californian cookbook  
by Jacqueline Higuera McMahan

Good way to use up leftover cooked chicken or pot roast—use during the week or at small barbecues

## Chicken or Beef Filling

- 1 T. olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 red or green bell pepper, seeds removed and chopped
- 4 Anaheim chiles, charred, peeled, seeded, and chopped
- 3 medium tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and chopped
- 1 to 2 tablespoons chile powder
- 1 T. dried oregano
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cumin seeds, crushed
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 4 ears of corn, kernels cut off
- 1 chicken (3 pounds), roasted or poached, meat removed and diced, or 1 pound diced pot roast
- 1 cup pitted black olives



## Masa-Cheese Crust

- 1 1/3 cups masa harina
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons red chile powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 cups chicken broth, hot, or more as needed
- 1/4 cup pure olive oil or canola oil
- 2/3 cup grated sharp Cheddar cheese
- 8 dried corn husks (hojas), soaked in hot water for 30 minutes



To prepare the filling, heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat and sauté the onion until softened, about five minutes. Add the garlic and cook briefly. Add the bell pepper, chiles, tomatoes, chile powder, oregano, cumin, salt, and pepper to taste. Simmer until the sauce thickens, about 15 minutes. Add the corn, chicken or roast, and olives. Simmer for 10 minutes more. Set aside.

To prepare the crust, stir the masa harina, salt, chile powder, and baking powder together with a whisk in a large bowl. Combine the broth and the oil. Add the liquid to the masa mixture, stirring to form a very soft dough. Add a little more broth or warm water if it seems too thick. Add the grated cheese.

Preheat the oven to 350° F. Oil a long, deep, 3-quart ovenproof dish. Spread half of the masa dough on the bottom of the dish. Spread the filling on top and finish with a layer of masa dough. Cover with oiled aluminum foil or soaked corn husks, pressing the husks into the masa layer and tucking the edges down into the pastel so it is well sealed. Bake until the masa crust is firm to the touch, 45 to 50 minutes. Remove the foil and let rest for 15 minutes before serving. The corn husks remain to add an earthy touch to the Pastel de Tamal. They are peeled off at the table, just before serving.